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ABSTRACT

When a community college commits itself to adult education it must commit itself to three tenets: (1) that continuing lifelong learning is no longer an option, but rather a necessity, for individuals and communities; (2) that a community college must take its direction from the needs and wishes of its community and work to meet these needs in every possible way; and (3) that the ultimate goal of education should be to create and maintain not an educated society but a "learning" society. In order to implement these tenets through a program of community-renewal education, the community college must have funding, which has traditionally been very hard to get for avocational noncredit courses and activities not structured as courses. It is essential that all members of the board, administration, and faculty support the idea of a community-based institution, and that the public and legislature value lifelong learning in all its aspects before funding becomes a possibility, whether through federal aid, cooperation with other community agencies, private gifts, private foundations or user fees. (AYC)

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INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO FUNDING ADULT LEARNING PROGRAMS

James F. Gollattscheck
President
Valencia Community College

JC 780 348

A speech given at the National Council on Community Services and Continuing Education Conference held on May 17-19, 1978, in Miami, Florida

Institutional Commitment to Funding
Adult Learning Programs

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Welcome fellow revolutionaries! I say that half in jest but also in dead seriousness for we are involved in a revolution in higher education as radical as any social movement has ever been. Success of the revolution will be of tremendous benefit to American society--failure will mean continuing decay of a great many of America's communities. The question is not whether the adult learner will "$ave" higher education as was the title of Dr. Hodgkinson's speech two days ago. The question as I see it is, "Will higher education save our citizens, our communities, and our nation?" We were told in the keynote address that 17 million people are involved in other than institutions of higher education. This may be true and I am not worried about this particular factor. I am concerned, however, that few such educational endeavors are concerned with solving social, political, humanistic, or environmental problems. They are generally self-serving. Holiday Inn University, for example, is concerned with training people to manage Holiday Inns. They are not concerned with solving a national problem or issue. The pointing of a finger at these operations for being self-serving should also point to us for we have indeed been equally self-serving.

I welcomed you as revolutionaries and I must admit that I am one of the revolutionaries--perhaps more than a revolutionary--a zealot and an evangelist. I probably fall within Eric Hoffer's definition of the "true believer." Like Martin Luther King, I have a dream and, although I lack his eloquence, my dream and King's would be much alike in many ways.

This morning I want to talk about this revolution. I am going to assume that most of you are already a part of the revolution and what I want to do is plot with you about how we can best carry forth our cause.

Like most revolutionaries, I have a manifesto and I would like to relate it to you. The first tenet is that continuing lifelong learning opportunities for all people is no longer an option for either individuals or communities. Alvin Toffler has pointed out in Future Shock the demands of increasing technology. We are well aware of technological change and, more importantly, of the change in the rate of change. We once considered that education was something like a vaccination against ignorance. If given to a person in his youth, he was forever immune from ignorance. We now find that ignorance is a recurring disease and there is no immunization which will prevent it. At times, it seems as though we are walking up a down escalator. As long as we keep moving (learning) we may stay at the same spot or we may move up a little bit. Once we stop, we very slowly and surely slide backwards into ignorance. The increasing

number of people out of the mainstream threatens our entire society. Seventeen years ago Margaret Mead wrote an article in which she talked about the need to move from vertical transmission of learning, that is from generation to generation, father to son, old teacher to young learner, to lateral transmission. What she was saying is that there is no longer time in our current, rapidly changing society for one generation to teach another. Things are happening so quickly that we must teach each other all the time.

The next tenet in my manifesto is that a true community college takes its direction from the needs and wishes of its community and works to meet these needs in every way possible. Credit courses and degrees are one way, but only one of the ways. There are a multitude of needed learning experiences and activities. Being community-based means more than anything else a relationship between the college and the community. It may be immodest to quote from a book one has participated in but these words from College Leadership for Community Renewal, which I wrote with two of my colleagues, says it very simply:

> In pragmatic terms, the community-based community college delivers the kinds of education community members want and need not what pedagogs think is good for them. It does so at locations where the learners are not where conventional college or organizations indicate they should be. It is guided by an open participation in defining comprehensive learning needs, suggesting solutions, and facilitating delivery, not by the decisions of professional educators and governing boards alone. As it is now emerging the college we would call the community renewal college is both learner and community oriented. It is no longer merely a "giver" to those who are inclined to accept its gifts. Instead, its role is that cooperator with the community

in joint efforts to put people back together in meaningful human endeavors.

There are several images that one can use. Dr. Gleazer, President of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, has described community-based education as being much like a public utility. Like the electric service that runs throughout the community and throughout your homes, it is there, it can be plugged into, it can be used as needed, but when it is not needed the plug can be pulled or the switch can be thrown. It is there for whatever purpose an individual needs it. We have also talked about community-based education as being like a community cooperative, where the community itself are the members of the cooperative, where they have banded together to provide services to themselves that they could not provide as individuals.

The last tenet in my manifesto is that the ultimate goal of education should be to create and maintain not an educated society but a "learning" society. The time has passed when anyone can ever be called "educated." What we need is continuous human renewal. John Gardner said it best in what has been to me one of the most important books in my own continuing education and one that should be required reading for anyone involved in community education--Self Renewal: The Individual and the Innovative Society. In 1964, John Gardner wrote:

> Unless we attend to the requirements of renewal, aging institutions and organizations will bring our civilization to mouldering ruin. Unless we cope with the ways in

which modern society oppresses the individual, we shall lose the creative spark that renews both society and man. Unless we foster versatile innovative and self-renewing men and women, all the ingenious social arrangements in the world will not help us.

I think that is enough of the "heavy stuff." As I said earlier, I am going to assume that most of you agree, at least in principle, with my revolutionary manifesto. What we really need to talk about and what we will need help with is how to go about doing it.

Let's look at the problems. Imagine a total program of community-renewal education. Could you get it funded in your college? What about credit and degree programs? No problem here. Practically every college can get funding for anything that is offered as a credit course or as a degree program. What about noncredit courses related to occupational or other traditionally respectable areas? This is slightly less of a problem. How many of you could get funding from your college to operate a noncredit refresher course for the nurse who has been out of the field for some time? Probably most of you. What about avocational noncredit courses? Here we have a real problem for most colleges. How many of you could get college funding for a noncredit course in the appreciation of opera? Not very many of you. I deliberately avoided such red herrings as poodle grooming, belly dancing, macrame, and cake decorating. It's interesting that every state legislature seems to have picked up its own particular flag to wave. Last, and perhaps least, what about programs

and activities whether avocational or vocational that are not structured as courses? Here we have major problems. How many of you could get college funding for a center for consumerism in a low-income area? This might involve counseling and seminars, but would mainly be a center for distribution of information to help people make better decisions. I do not see any hands raised. To operate such a program we would have to go the route of grants and other than college or state funding.

Where does institutional commitment come in? The answer is very simple. If solutions are to be found for the major problems of funding, if ways to fund the broad scope of activities in a community-based community college--at the simplest level if the college is to be community-based at all rather than superficially involved in community services--the commitment must begin with the governing board and the chief executive and run throughout all those who work in the program.

I do not mean that the impetus must begin with the board or the president, but, unless they buy into the concept that all people need education at all times in their lives and that meeting the educational needs of the total community whatever and wherever they may be is one of the basic missions of the college, you will be less than 100 percent successful.

Again, if I may quote from College Leadership for

Community Renewal.

Before community-based educational programs in all their aspects can be deemed worthy of public support those who govern and fund higher education will have to overcome a narrow view of the mission of postsecondary education which has been

1. Elitist, in the sense that it has been more acceptable to spend public funds on the students who can achieve the most

2. Aimed primarily at the young under the assumption that education should be preparation for life rather than a process carried on throughout life

3. Oriented toward an education which leads to a degree or to preparation for work ignoring the values inherent in education for self-improvement, enrichment, and recreation

Getting this commitment is a little like the chicken and the egg conundrum--which comes first? You may have a president who is already totally sold on these concepts. Certainly not a majority of our 1200 community colleges, and you may have a board committed--a real rarity. But unless you do, then there must be a process of education and demonstration. You cannot expect a lay board whose own education was probably traditional and formal to accept on faith a concept of education that is new and perhaps even contrary to long-held views. Why should they buy a "pig in a poke" that some zealot community services coordinator or dean has cooked up. The same may go for the chief executive who may hold very proudly to a prestigeous "higher education" concept of his or her college.

The Board and chief executive must be shown not just told that such programs work, that they are needed, and,

most of all, that they build a level of community support that can be gained in no other way. They need to see that such activities add positively to the image of the college.

I am frequently asked, "How can we, as a college, become community-based?" This is a very frustrating question because there is no answer. One does not simply decide to become community-based and in one action achieve its goal. Nor do I think it is possible to be totally community-based nor totally campus-based. Any college with some degree of commitment to the community is already moving toward being community-based. A community-based college is somewhere on the continuum between total campus-based and total community-based. I doubt that any college has achieved the ultimate in terms of community-based operation. You become community-based by beginning to take steps in that direction. That is also how you develop institutional support. You build as slowly or as rapidly as your circumstances dictate, keeping in mind the basic and absolute need for institutional support.

You might ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do your Board and president understand the program you are trying to operate or are you quietly bootlegging?

2. Do they hear about your success stories--not from you--but from people in the community? One very

positive suggestion is to ensure you are offering some programs of interest to their friends and colleagues.

3. Do requests from community groups get visability through the press, internal communications, committees, and reports to the Board of Trustees?

4. Finally, does the community view you as community-based? A college is only as community-based as its community perceives it as being. All of the glowing words in your public relations material mean nothing. If your community views you as a liberal arts college then that is what you are.

You must recognize from the beginning that not until the public and legislature value lifelong learning in all its aspects will there be regular tax support for these programs. In the meantime we must be entrepreneurs, marketers, freeloaders, hitchhikers, catalysts--putting together programs with other people's money.

Let me give you some obvious and specific ways to fund community-based operations. First and foremost would be federal dollars. This requires institutional commitment. Dr. John Young, Director of Grants and Projects at Santa Fe Community College, Gainesville, Florida, recently did a study of the variables involved in Florida community colleges

with regard to federal funding. In noting specific differences between high-funded and low-funded institutions, Young's study confirms the obvious that:

1. The high-funded institutions invest more dollars in supporting the federal relations/resource development function than do low-funded institutions.

2. Personnel of the high-funded institutions are more sophisticated through travel, exposure, access to information, and agency contacts than are personnel of the low-funded institutions.

3. High-funded institutions have full-time resource development officers with adequate supportive staff, while other institutions have individuals assigned part-time responsibilities for federal relations/resource development activities.

4. Travel budgets and agency contacts are related to total dollars received; the more contacts and work related travel the greater the total dollars received.

5. High-funded institutions maintain a higher and more consistent level of funding than do low-funded institutions.

6. Institutions committed to adequate staffing, maintaining the greatest access to information of agency contacts, and having flexible budgets for the government activities receive more dollars from federal sources.

Young's study clearly indicated that the risk capital necessary to establish a development office is capital wisely invested.

Federal support, however, is not without drawbacks. It is generally considered as "seed money." It does run out. It can, however, allow you to demonstrate needs and success and thereby build your institutional and community support.

Second to federal support I would place cooperation with other community agencies as a most important source of

wherewithall to operate community-based programs. Joint efforts, both formal and informal, can greatly extend your own availability of dollars. Many groups in your community have some funding, have volunteer forces, have knowledge of the community, and, most important of all, they have already established a momentum. You can hitchhike or piggyback--extend your own resources--by joining forces. In this way both may go further. Relationships between community agency institutions and community colleges may range from the very casual advisory relationship to direct assistance, joint ventures, and, finally, into mergers. There are excellent examples already at work of all four types of relationships.

Another source of funding is private giving. This is still in infancy in community colleges. Many community colleges are just beginning to create foundations and learning how to go about developing programs of private giving. This has long been the domain of the private institution. We should realize, however, that now that private institutions have more and more federal money available and now that we are less and less completely tax supported, the line is very fuzzy. We are all really tax-assisted institutions with few institutions free of tax support and few institutions fully tax-supported.

Other area funding is private foundations. Again, this requires highly skilled resource development and is an area that most community colleges are not familiar with. A well-

organized resource development office would do well to take this as an in-service training goal--developing the ability to deal with private foundations.

Another operational theory of supporting community-based education is the old "Robin Hood" theory. It is possible to offer certain courses at a profit to those elements of the community that are able to pay. The college may then use these profits to offer courses to low-income groups. For example, at Valencia we have offered prestige-type courses to the Junior League set and then used the excess funds to offer courses in parent education without fees to low-income groups.

A final suggestion is that, in many cases, we must assume that the user will pay. To this extent we are operating much as a private institution. Many of our courses perhaps ought to be paid for by those who enroll. A variation of this is to offer courses like contract courses to business and industry where the organization pays the fees for the students enrolled.

The ultimate goal, of course, is full recognition of the need for continuous lifelong learning and equal funding for all programs of the community college regardless of its orientation. An activity which is valuable to the community is no less valuable because it is a service rather than a credit course.

I should like to close by relating a story. It seems there was a very wise man riding on a donkey across the desert somewhere in the Middle East. He heard a great commotion and arrived at a small oasis where some tents were pitched and several people were loudly arguing, figuring in the sand, and using an abacus trying to solve a problem. As the man neared, he saw that in one of the tents there was a very elderly man quietly observing the commotion. Approaching the man, the traveler asked what the problem was. Whereupon the man explained that he was very old and very ill and that it was his family custom that whenever the head of the household passed on the family wealth was distributed as follows: one-half to a son, one-third to a son-in-law, one-ninth to a brother-in-law. "The problem is," he explained, "all I have is 17 donkeys and they cannot find a way to divide 17 donkeys." The wise traveler said, "I think I can solve your problem. Let me give you my donkey. Now you have 18. You can give one-half to the son, that will be 9; one-third to the son-in-law, that will be 6; one-ninth to the brother-in-law, that will be 2." The elderly man nodded with great pleasure. The traveler then said, "Now add up how many donkeys you have given away. 9 + 6 + 2 = 17. So you see, you don't really need my donkey after all." The moral of the story is that an institution doesn't necessarily have to lose its "donkey" in order to help its community solve its educational problems.

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